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ENG 2760-002: Introduction to Professional Writing

Tim Taylor
Eastern Illinois University

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ENG 2760-002 Course Policy
Introduction to Professional Writing
 10 am MWF, 3120 & 3130 Coleman Hall

Dr. Tim Taylor
 Office: 3820 Coleman Hall Phone: 581-6309
 Office Hours: MWF, 9-10 am; TuTh, 9-11 am
 email: ttaylor@eiu.edu

“Whoever does not study rhetoric will be a victim of it.”

-Ancient Greek wall inscription

“Having to say something is a very different matter from having something to say.”

-John Dewey, *How We Think*

Texts

- Van, Rys, Meyer, and Sebranek. *The Business Writer*.
- Kolln. *Rhetorical Grammar: Grammatical Choices, Rhetorical Effects*.

Materials

Writing instruments, paper, paper clips, a college dictionary, a typewriter or computer, and other appropriate supplies

Course Description

Introduction to the theory and practice of writing and writers in professional settings. Prerequisite 1002G. WC

Student Learning Objectives for this Course

Students will...

- Refine writing and editing skills learned in previous writing courses
- Recognize the responsibility of technical and professional writers to communicate clearly and concisely to satisfy an audience's need for information
- Understand the value of professional and technical writing for readers in the world of work
- Demonstrate college- and professional-level writing produced through the process of prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and proofreading
- Write purposeful adequately developed paragraphs and sentences that are direct, economical, free of ambiguity, and structurally appropriate for the ideas expressed and for the audience to whom it is directed
- Develop research skills, including effective use of source materials and the principles of documentation

Expected Performance Outcomes

Students will exhibit the ability to:

- Analyze the need for a document in terms of a rhetorical situation to be addressed, the context of the writing project, the purpose of the document, and the audience's needs
- Select an appropriate document format and writing style for a given writing situation
- Select and design simple graphics and integrate them logically into written text
- Revise and edit for clarity and correctness, and produce professional-looking final documents
- Distinguish between objective and subjective language
- Conduct library, electronic, and field research effectively
- Document sources appropriately within reports
- Work effectively and ethically in a group writing project and group presentation
- Write clear, concise prose in Edited American English

Success in this course includes (1) finding your own creative ways to make topics and assignments personally interesting--especially if your first instinct is to label them "boring" or "too hard," (2) believing that you have something worthwhile to say, and (3) expressing it after you've debated/pondered/ listened/ read/ explored beyond the surface.

Course Requirements

Class consists of in-class writing activities, discussions of assigned works, peer review sessions, short writing assignments, formal and informal presentations, a copyediting exam, and you can count on pop quizzes. There will be seven larger writing assignments. I also have a participation grade and a writing process grade. Active and constructive class participation can make a positive impact on your overall grade.

If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.

Your Instructor

If you are having any trouble with the material covered in this course, or if you simply want reassurance that you are on the right track, please do not hesitate to visit my office. Many times a short visit to go over a paper or to clarify a concept can save you time in the long run and improve your chances of success in this course. In addition to being in my office during the posted hours, I can also make arrangements to meet at other times to better accommodate your schedule.

Attendance, Late Work Policy, and Expectations

Students are expected to attend every class. However, as detailed in the EIU Undergraduate Catalog, "properly verified absences due to illness, emergency, or participation in an official University activity" are recognized. When an absence is unavoidable, students are responsible for acquiring missed course materials and the information supplied in class (sickness or emergency), submitting an assignment at a time in accordance with the instructor (University activity), or using one of their late assignment opportunities (sickness, emergency, or University activity).

You have the opportunity to use two extensions in order to submit two late assignments of your choosing. If you want an extension to be granted, you must communicate with me about your situation prior to the class time that the assignment is due. This can be done by a phone conversation, an exchange of emails, or talking with me in my office. Unless it's an extreme situation, I typically grant an extension of a day or two for late assignments.

I do not have an attendance policy that reduces students' overall grades based on absences. But keep in mind that this course is a class in writing, one where students will be actively composing work and collaborating with others, so if excessive absences happen (five or more absences is excessive to me), those days missed are usually reflected in the quality of work produced by a student, and they also affect a student's participation grade.

Although I keep accurate records of your grades and progress, I also expect you to keep track of your grades. You should document all your point totals for essays, journals, quizzes, and other assignments throughout the semester to give yourself an idea of your grade in the course. It is your education, and I believe students should take an active role in assessing how they are doing in their courses.

If there is an extreme discrepancy between in-class and out of class work, I reserve the right to base a student's grade on in-class work alone.

A Note on Professionalism

Unless otherwise indicated, all class work must be typed. If an assignment isn't typed, I will not accept it.

Revision

Students can revise all of the larger business/technical documents except for the cover letter. Time allotted for revision is usually one week from the day they are ready to be passed back in class. I will not grade revisions unless the original graded document is submitted with it. If you choose to revise, it should help your overall grade; however, I expect deep revision, not just surface editing.

Extra Credit Opportunities

There are opportunities for extra credit points (maximum of 10 points) throughout the course. To receive extra credit points, a student has to work as a "grammar sleuth," a person who notices grammar mistakes and then reports these to the instructor. The process works like this: Through the course of reading textbooks, newspapers, magazines, junk mail, or other written communication, if a student finds a sentence that is ungrammatical, he or she can earn two points of extra credit per item found and analyzed. Once a student discovers a grammatical mistake, he or she must write a short paragraph (3-5 sentences) explaining why the sentence is ungrammatical, offer a correction for the author, and attach a photocopy of the document that has the grammatical problem.

Note: Intended fragments and headlines are not eligible for extra credit. And once one student finds a grammatical mistake, that mistake is no longer "fair game."

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Here is the official statement on plagiarism by EIU's English Department: "Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism—"The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author, and representation of them as one's own original work" (*Random House Dictionary of the English Language*)—has the right and responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignments of a grade of F for the assigned essay and a grade of F for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office. Respect for the work of others should encompass all formats, including print, electronic, and oral sources."

Here is an explanation of plagiarism from my previous English department that explains this important concept:

Plagiarism

To present someone else's work or ideas as one's own is plagiarism. A student commits plagiarism by

- copying, word for word, someone else's writing without putting that passage in quotation marks and identifying the source.
- taking someone else's writing, changing some of the words, and not identifying the source;
- taking someone else's ideas or organization of ideas, putting them into his/her own words and not identifying the source;
- having someone else change the student's writing—a tutor, friend, or relative, for instance—and creating the impression that this is the student's own work; or
- purchasing or downloading papers or passages from the Web.

As a rule of thumb, if you have to have a source before your eyes as you write, you need to copy it accurately, put quotation marks around it, and acknowledge your source. I reserve the right to ask for pre-writing, drafts, etc. or faculty review to prove that it is the student's own work. As most instructors are, I am involved in a "network" to catch plagiarism, and I sometimes randomly—and sometimes not so randomly—check students' work to make sure it is their own. If there is a huge difference between the quality of in-class work and out-of-class work, I reserve the right to base the final grade on in-class work

alone. In this class, there is a social contract between the instructor and students that the work submitted will be the students' own documents, not someone else's work. Do your own writing.

Class Conduct

My classroom community demands good manners, careful listening, respect for diverse backgrounds and opinions, and equal time for everyone who wants to share his or her perspective. In sum, I expect students to act in a mature and collegial manner. Student-learners should come to class having read the material, eager to participate, and ready to write.

Good Guidelines to Abide by in Any College Course:

1. Come to class on time and stay the entire period.
2. When we discuss a reading or writing assignment, have the materials in front of you on your desk. When we are doing in-class writing, be prepared to actively brainstorm, draft and compose your ideas. And bring texts, paper, and pen
3. Have an opinion and support your opinion with details and examples.
4. Play well with others. Respect others' opinions and be open to them. Actively help your peers in collaborative activities like peer review.
5. When working in a group, stay on the assigned tasks.
6. Do not carry on side conversations with other students when the instructor or a student "has the floor" during class.
7. General rudeness and disrespect is not tolerated.
8. Cell phones and pagers need to be turned off.
9. No profanity.
10. No personal grooming.
11. No sleeping. If you do, I will ask you to leave.
12. Wait until I dismiss you before packing your book bags to leave.

If you have concerns about this list or any other aspect of the class, please arrange to discuss the matter with me during my office hours. Similarly, if circumstances arise that will impact your performance in this class, let me know as soon as possible.

Composition of the Overall Grade

(all assignments and point totals are tentative)

Participation 50 points
Discussion, in-class writing, small group work, informal presentations

The Writing Process 65
10 pts. available for each Peer Review session except
the Longer Report (5 pts.)

Quizzes tbd

Formal Presentation on the Longer Report 50

Final: Copyediting exam 50

Grammar/Style exercises 102

| | |
|---|----|
| Sentence Imitation Exercises | 40 |
| Rhetorical Grammar Exercises | 44 |
| Integrating Quotations in APA Style | 10 |
| Summary, Paraphrase, and Quoting Exercise | 8 |

Shorter Writing Assignments 40

| | |
|-------------------------------|----|
| Memo of Introduction | 10 |
| Complaint Letter | 10 |
| Professional Email Assignment | 20 |
| Evaluation Memorandum | 10 |

Formal Business/Technical Documents 750

| | |
|--------------------------|-----|
| Non-Sensitive Memorandum | 100 |
| Sensitive Memorandum | 100 |
| Short Report | 100 |
| Longer Report (Group) | 150 |
| Professional Profile | 100 |
| PR Flyer/Brochure | 100 |
| Cover Letter | 100 |

1107 points

Grading Scale for Formal Documents:

| | | | |
|-------------|------------|------------|------------|
| 100-92% = A | 89-88 = B+ | 79-78 = C+ | 69-68 = D+ |
| 91-90 = A- | 87-82 = B | 77-72 = C | 67-62 = D |
| | 81-80 = B- | 71-70 = C- | 61-60 = D- |

Overall Grading Scale:

| | |
|-------------|------------------|
| 100-90% = A | 69-60 = D |
| 89-80 = B | 59 and below = F |
| 79-70 = C | |

ENG 2760 Syllabus

All assignments and due dates are tentative

BW = *The Business Writer*

RG = *Rhetorical Grammar*

* = handout

Week 1: 3120 CH

M 8-25 Introductions and Introduction to the Course

W 8-27 Introduction & Ch 1 BW

Critical Thinking Activity No. 4 on p. 44—informal presentation

Memo of Introduction due

F 8-29 Unit I: Non-Sensitive Memorandum

Ch. 21, 22, & 25 (397-400 402-3, 405, 413) BW

Critical Thinking Activity No. 3 on p. 424 BW—informal presentation

Week 2: 3130 CH

M 9-1 Labor Day—No classes

W 9-3 Introduction & Ch. 1 RG

Do Exercise 4 RG on p. 22

Ch. 9 & 10 (187-91, 195) BW

F 9-5 Ch. 2 RG

“For Group Discussion” RG on p. 30-1

Preparing for Peer Review

Week 3: 3120 CH

M 9-9 ***Peer Review of Non-Sensitive Memo***

W 9-11 Ch 11 BW

Ch. 3 RG

Exercise 3 RG (p. 50) due

Exercise 9 RG (p. 57) due

F 9-13 **Non-Sensitive Memo due**

Unit II: Sensitive Letter

Ch. 26 (425-27) BW

Week 4: 3130 CH

M 9-15 Ch. 26 (428-50) BW

Critical Thinking Activities 2 & 3 on p. 450—informal presentation

W 9-17 Ch. 6 RG

“For Group Discussion” RG—numbers 1 & 3—on pages 113-4

“For Group Discussion” RG on page 117

Exercise 17 RG (p. 118-9) due

Ch. 12 BW

Complaint Letter due

F 9-19 Ch. 4 RG

“For Group Discussion” RG (p. 71-2)

Exercise 11 RG (p. 72) due

Critical Thinking Activity No. 1 on p. 242 BW—informal presentation

Week 5: 3130

M 9-22 ***Peer Review of Sensitive Memo***

W 9-24 Critical Thinking Activity No. 2 on p. 508 BW—informal presentation
Ch. 16 BW

F 9-26 **Sensitive Memo due**
Unit III: Short Report
Ch. 29, 30 BW

Week 6: 3120 CH

M 9-29 Ch. 5 & 7 RG
Do Exercise 14 RG (p. 92-3)
Do Exercise 20.C RG (p. 137-8)
Do Exercise 23 RG (p. 146-7)

W 10-1 Ch. 13 & 14 BW
*Copy Editing Symbols
Copy Editing Practice

F 10-3 Ch. 8 & 10 RG
“For Group Discussion” RG (p. 222-3)
“For Group Discussion” RG (p. 228-30)
Exercise 26 RG (p. 160) due
Imitation Exercise (Patterns 1-10) due

Week 7: 3120 CH

M 10-6 ***Peer Review of Short Report***

W 10-8 **Short Report due**
Unit IV: Group Informational Report and the Formal Presentation
Group Logistics and Brainstorming

F 10-10 Fall Break

Week 8: 3130 CH

M 10-13 Ch. 5 BW
Ch. 7 (117-25, 128-29, 134-35, 152-62) BW
Using APA Style: Summarizing, Paraphrasing, and Quoting
Using Graphics Effectively
Using Web-based Databases in the Library

W 10-15 **Imitation Exercise (Patterns 11-19) due**
Copy Editing Practice
Anonymous Mid-Term Student Feedback

F 10-17 No Class but Mandatory Conferences with Groups

Week 9: 3120 CH

M 10-20 Presentation Methods—Working Together for a Cohesive Message
Ch. 44 BW
Sample group reports (handout)
Summarizing, Paraphrasing, and Quoting Exercise due
Integrating Quotations in APA Style Exercise due

W 10-22 No Class—Research/Practice—Voluntary Conferences

F 10-24 No Class—Research/Practice—Voluntary Conferences

Week 10: 3130 CH

M 10-27 Group Presentations

W 10-29 Group Presentations

F 10-31 Group Presentations

Week 11: 3120 CH

M 11-3 ***Peer Review of Longer Report***

W 11-5 Group work on the report in class

F 11-7 **Group Informational Report due**

Unit V: Professional Profile

Crafting Questions and Interviewing Pointers

Week 12: 3130 CH

M 11-10 *Feature Writing

Copy Editing Practice

W 11-12 *Mandatory Conferences*

F 11-14 Comp Day

Week 13: 3120 CH

M 11-17 ***Peer Review of Professional Profile***

W 11-19 **Professional Profile due**

Unit VI: PR Flyer/Brochure

Mini-Unit: Professional Email assignment

Ch. 23 (369-73), 34 (547, 552-53) BW

F 11-21 **Professional Email due**

Thanksgiving Recess

Week 14: 3130 CH

M 12-1 Sample Flyers and Brochures for Analysis

W 12-3 ***Peer Review of PR Flyer/Brochure***

F 12-5 **PR Flyer due**

Unit VII: Cover Letter

Unit VIII: The Copy Editing Final

Week 15: 3120 CH

M 12-8 Sample Cover Letters for Analysis

Copy Editing Practice

W 12-10 Comp Day

Copy Editing Practice

F 12-12 ***Peer Review of Cover Letter***

Evaluation Memo due

Final: Cover Letter due & Copy Editing Exam